Distribution of forest land to tribals

1243. SHRI K. CHANDRAN PILLAI: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal pending with Government related to distribution of forest land to tribals in Kerala;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the number of families estimated to be given possession certificates;

(d) whether any cut-off date fixed for issuing certificates;

(e) whether necessary clearance have been given to the proposal; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) to (f) No, Sir. On the basis of the proposal submitted by the State Government of Kerala, the Ministry of Environment and Forests has accorded approval in February, 2004 for diversion of 7,693.22 hectares of forest land under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 for resettlement of landless tribals.

Review of the steps taken to protect tigers

1244. SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA:
SHRI KRISHAN LAL BALMIKI:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any review of the steps taken to protect and promote tigers in different national parks, reserves and sanctuaries in the country, following the special surveys undertaken at the behest of the Prime Minister's two years back has since been made;

(b) if so, the increase or decrease in tiger population during the period, sector-wise; and

(c) the steps being taken in that direction in the light of such surveys and reviews?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) Yes, Sir. Project Tiger has been reviewed by the Tiger Task Force constituted by the National Board for Wildlife, Chaired by the Hon'ble Prime Minister. The Ministry of Environment & Forests is implementing the urgent recommendations of the said Task Force for strengthening tiger conservation which, *inter-alia,* includes the recent amendment to the Wildlife (Protection) Amendment Act for constituting the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) and the Wildlife Crime Control Bureau. The NTCA has already come into force *w.e.f.* 4th Septermber, 2006. Apart from above, all the Tiger Reserver have been evaluated by a panel of independent experts based on a set of criteria (45) developed by the World Commission on Protected Areas, as adapted for Indian conditions. The evaluation has been peer-reviewed by the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN). Both the assessment as well as peer-review have been placed in both the Houses of Parliament.

(b) The process of All India estimation of tigers, copredators and prey animals using the refined methodology, as approved by the Tiger Task Force, is ongoing in collaboration with the Wildlife Institute of India. The said process on completion, would indicate the status of tiger population, its copredators, prey animals and habitat in the country.

(c) The steps taken at the Government of India for conservation of tigers is at Statement.

Statement

Several milestone initiatives have been taken by the Government in the recent past for tiger conservation which are as below:

1. Strengthening of anti-poaching activities, including special strategy for monsoon patrolling, by providing funding support to Tiger Reserve States, as proposed by them, for deployment of anti-poaching squads involving ex-army personnel/home guards, apart from workforce comprising of local people, in addition to strengthening of communication/wireless facilities.

2. Implementation of the urgent recommendations of the Tiger Task Force constituted by the National Board for Wildlife chaired by

the Hon'ble Prime Minister, which, *inter alia*, include Amendment of the Wild life (Protection) Act, 1972 for creating the National Tiger Conservation Authority and the Tiger and Other Endangered Species Crime Control Bureau.

3. The National Tiger Conservation Authority has been constituted with effect from 4.9.2006, which would strengthen tiger conservation by, *inter alia,* ensuring normative standards in tiger reserve management, preparation of reserve specific tiger conservation plan, laying down annual/audit report before Parliament, constituting State level Steering Committees under the Chairmanship of Chief Ministers and establishment of Tiger Conservation Foundation.

4. Assessment of tiger habitat status in the country at Taluka amplification in the Geographical Information System (GIS) domain in collaboration with the Wild life Institute of India.

5. Comparative appraisal of forest cover status in and around tiger reserves (upto a radial distance of 10 kms.), in collaboration with the Forest Survey of India for evolving reserve specific restorative strategies involving local people in the peripheral/buffer areas.

6. Assessment of tiger reserves by a panel of independent experts based on 45 parameters, adapted from the framework of the World Commission on Protected Areas, which has been peer reviewed by the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN) and laid in the Parliament.

7. Refinement of the All India Tiger Estimation process (including other prominent prey and predators apart from habitat monitoring) in collaboration with the Wild life Institute of India.

8. Bilateral initiatives with neighbouring tiger range countries.

9. Providing funding support for eco-development around core areas of tiger reserve to foster inclusive management and taking initiatives for evolving a set of eco-tourism guidelines to benefit local people.

10. Taking initiatives for enhancing the village relocation package through a professional agency.

Apart from the above, other initiatives taken by the Government for wild life conservation are as below:

11. Legal protection has been provided to wild animals against hunting and commercial exploitation under the provisions of the Wild life (Protection) Act, 1972.

12. Several rare and endangered species of wild animal have been included in the Scheduled of Wild life (Protection) Act, 1972, thereby giving it highest degree of protection.

13. The Wild life (Protection) Act, 1972 has been amended and made more stringent. The punishment in cases of offences has been enhanced. The Act also provides for forfeiture of any equipment, vehicle or weapon that has been used for committing any wild life offence.

14. Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has been empowered under the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 to apprehend and prosecute wildlife offenders.

15. Government of India has set up Regional and Sub-regional Offices for wildlife preservation in major export and trade centers of the country to prevent smuggling of wild animals and their products.

16. Financial and technical help is provided to the States under various Centrally Sponsored Schemes, *viz.* Project Tiger, Project Elephant and Development of National Parks and Sanctuaries for enhancing the capacity and infrastructure of the States for providing effective protection to wild animals.

17. A National Wildlife Action Plan 2002-2016 was adopted by the Indian Board for Wild life under the chairmanship of Prime Minister in January, 2002. The plan outlines the strategy for conservation and protection of wild life in the country.

18. Government of India is a signatory to many international conventions concering biodiversity conservation and control of illegal trade in wild flora and fauna.

19. Bilateral agreements have been signed with Nepal and Republic of China for controlling trans-boundary illegal trade in wild life.

20. A Global Tiger Forum of Tiger Range Countries has been created for addressing international issues related to tiger conservation.

Emmission by transport vehicles

1245. SHRI GIREESH KUMAR SANGHI: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) what measures are being taken by Government to mitigate the emissions being released by the transport vehicles, especially in the urban India; and

(b) the details of Government's strategy on global warming?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) Measures taken to deal with the vehicular emissions include--

* A road map upto 2010 has been laid down by the Expert Committee on Auto Fuel Policy for controlling Vehicular pollution from both new as well as in-use vehicles all over the country;
* Implementation of Bharat Stage-II emission norms for all categories of new vehicles (except two and three-wheelers) from 1.4.2005 throughout the country.
* Implementation of Bharat Stage-III emission norms in 11metro cities from April 1, 2005, for both petrol and diesel driven new 4-wheeler;
* Implementation of fuel quality commensurate with emission norms;
* Implementation of new emission norms for in-use vehicles from October, 2004 throughout the country;
* Initiation of Source Apportionment Studies in six cities, namely Delhi, Mumbai, Pune, Bangalore, Chennai and Kanpur;
* Introduction of cleaner fuels like Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) and Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) in selected cities;
* Fitment of catalytic converter for new petrol passenger cars in four metros from 1.4.1995 and 45 cities from 1.9.1998;